Amendments to the Claims

Listing of Claims:

Original claims 1-6 (canceled).

Replacement claims 1-6 (canceled).

7 (new). A method of monitoring a mode of operation of at least one load circuit being an electric consumer and connected to a controlled semiconductor switch and at least one alternate voltage source, which comprises the steps of:

supplying an alternating voltage containing positive and negative voltage half-waves to a circuit formed by the electric consumer and the controlled semiconductor switch;

guiding alternating currents flowing through the controlled semiconductor switch and the electric consumer through a common low-impedance precision resistor; and

evaluating a respective alternating voltage drop occurring at the common low-impedance precision resistor separately with respect to amplitudes of the positive and negative alternating voltage half-waves.

8 (new). The method according to claim 7, wherein:

the electric consumer is a domestic appliance; and

the controlled semiconductor switch is a triac.

9 (new). The method according to claim 7, wherein:

the electric consumer is one of two electric consumers; and

the controlled semiconductor switch is one of two controlled semiconductor switches each respectively connected to one of the electric consumers and both of the controlled semiconductor switches connected to the common low-impedance precision resistor.

10 (new). A circuit configuration for monitoring a mode of operation of at least one load circuit supplied by at least one alternating voltage source supplying an alternating voltage having positive and negative voltage half-waves, the circuit configuration comprising:

a controlled semiconductor switch connected to the load circuit functioning as an electric consumer;

a low-impedance precision resistor connected between said controlled semiconductor switch and the at least one alternating voltage source; and

an evaluation unit for separately evaluating the positive and negative voltage half-waves of the alternating voltage and connected to said low-impedance precision resistor.

11 (new). The circuit configuration according to claim 10, wherein said evaluation unit contains a first evaluating device for evaluating the positive voltage half-waves of the alternating voltage and a second evaluating device for evaluating the negative voltage half-waves of the alternating voltage.

12 (new). The circuit configuration according to claim 11, wherein:

said low-impedance precision resistor has first and second ends;

said first evaluating device contains a first operational amplifier having an inverting input and a non-inverting input coupled to said first and second ends of said low-impedance precision resistor; and

said second evaluating device contains a second operational amplifier having an inverting input and a non-inverting input connected to said first and second ends of said low-impedance precision resistor.

13 (new). The circuit configuration according to claim 12, wherein:

said non-inverting input of said first operational amplifier and said inverting input of said second operational

amplifier are coupled to said first end of said low-impedance precision resistor; and

said inverting input of said first operational amplifier and said non-inverting input of said second operational amplifier are coupled to said second end of said low-impedance precision resistor.

14 (new). The circuit configuration according to claim 12, wherein:

said first and second operational amplifiers have outputs; and

said evaluation unit has an evaluating circuit connected to said outputs of said first and second operational amplifiers, said evaluating circuit comparing output signals respectively output by said first and second operational amplifiers with specified threshold voltages and, depending on magnitudes of output voltages of the output signals delivered by said first and second operational amplifiers exceeding or falling below the specified threshold voltages, said evaluating circuit outputting status signals indicating either a correct current flow or a perturbed current flow through the electric consumer and said controlled semiconductor switch.

15 (new). The method according to claim 10, wherein:

the electric consumer is a domestic appliance; and

said controlled semiconductor switch is a triac.

16 (new). The method according to claim 10, wherein:

the electric consumer is one of two electric consumers; and

said controlled semiconductor switch is one of two controlled semiconductor switches each respectively connected to one of the electric consumers and both of said controlled semiconductor switches are connected to said low-impedance precision resistor.